

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 VANCOU 00765 050029Z

ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ERDA-07 AID-05 CEA-01
CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 FPC-01 H-02 INR-07 INT-05
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-05 USIA-15 OES-07
SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 ACDA-10 FEA-01 PRS-01
PA-02 /120 W

-----097559 050032Z /72

P 042250Z AUG 77

FM AMCONSUL VANCOUVER

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3658

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

CONGENS (BY POUCH)

UNCLAS VANCOUVER 0765

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: ENRG, CA

SUBJECT: ENERGY: NATURAL GAS PIPELINE DEBATE

1. BOTH MAJOR VANCOUVER NEWSPAPERS URGE GOC TO APPROVE THE
ALCAN GAS PIPELINE ROUTE. VANCOUVER SUN EDITORIAL OF AUGUST 4
FINDS THAT LYSYK S PROPOSAL FOR A DOLS 200 MILLION YUKON COMP-
ENSATION FUND AND HIS OTHER CONDITIONS MAKE "SENSE" BUT WARNS
THAT OTTAWA, IN DECIDING WHETHER TO IMPOSE CONDITIONS ON ITS
APPROVAL OF THE ALCAN ROUTE, MUST RECOGNIZE THAT THE AMERICANS
HAVE THE EL PASO OPTION TO FALL BACK ON. "THE AMERICAN (BARGAINING)
STRENGTH . . . IS THAT THEY CAN REJECT CANADIAN CONDITIONS AND
STILL DELIVER THE GAS . . . WHILE CANADA CANNOT INSIST ON ITS
CONDITIONS AND STILL CREATE THE MEANS TO ULTIMATELY DELIVER
CANADIAN GAS TO CANADIANS." EDITORIAL CONCLUDES THAT "THE
EVIDENCE NOW IN SUGGESTS . . . THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD APPROVE
THE ALCAN ROUTE IN THE INTEREST OF CANADIANS. THE REALPOLITIK
SUGGESTS THAT THE TERMS WE WANT MAY NOT BE THE ONES WE GET."

2. AUGUST 2 PROVINCE EDITORIAL STATES THAT WHILE THERE MAY BE
SOME DISPUTE WHETHER CANADA NEEDS A GAS PIPELINE AT THIS TIME,
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IF ENVIRONMENTAL SAFEGUARDS CAN BE PROVIDED AND RIGIDLY ENFORCED
"IT WOULD BE FOLLY TO DO ANYTHING BUT APPROVE A ROUTE THAT WILL
SATISFY AMERICAN NEEDS NOW AND OURS IN THE FUTURE." AUGUST 4
EDITORIAL WARNS AGAINST "EXCESSIVE RHETORIC" ABOUT THE PIPELINE
AND QUESTIONS WHETHER THE CUMULATIVE WEIGHT OF ALL THE PROPOSALS
IN THE VARIOUS PIPELINE REPORTS AND THEIR EXTRA COSTS WILL "SO
TIE THE HANDS OF OTTAWA THAT THEY WILL NOT BE ABLE TO NEGOTIATE

AN AGREEMENT WITH THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AND THE WHOLE SCHEME WILL DISAPPEAR." PROVINCE CONCLUDES THAT SUCH AN EVENT "WOULD BE UNFORTUNATE, AS THE EVENTUAL COST OF BUILDING A SEPARATE LINE TO BRING CANADIAN NEW GAS SOUTH WOULD BE ASTRONOMICAL."

3. AUGUST 4 VANCOUVER SUN CARRIES FRONT-PAGE HEADLINE "LAST-MINUTE JITTERS: PIPELINE COULD DIE." THRUST OF ACCOMPANYING REPORT IS THAT GOC PIPELINE COORDINATOR ROBINSON RECEIVED A "FROSTY" RECEPTION IN WASHINGTON LAST WEEK WHEN U.S. NEGOTIATORS MADE CLEAR THAT ALL OPTIONS, NOTABLY INCLUDING EL PASO, WERE BEING KEPT OPEN. NEWS ACCOUNT STATES THAT GOC MIGHT, THEREFORE, KEEP ITS PIPELINE DECISION NEXT WEEK DELIBERATELY VAGUE TO PROTECT ITSELF FROM BEING OVER-COMMITTED AND THEN BEING REJECTED BY THE U.S.

4. CLIPPINGS BEING MAILED TO EMBASSY AND EUR/CAN.
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